

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

From the
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

REC'D 18 AUG 2005

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To:

see form PCT/ISA/220

WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY
(PCT Rule 43bis.1)

Date of mailing
(day/month/year) see form PCT/ISA/210 (second sheet)

Applicant's or agent's file reference
see form PCT/ISA/220

FOR FURTHER ACTION
See paragraph 2 below

International application No.
PCT/GB2005/000937

International filing date (day/month/year)
10.03.2005

Priority date (day/month/year)
06.04.2004

International Patent Classification (IPC) or both national classification and IPC
G06F17/30

Applicant
BRITISH TELECOMMUNICATIONS PUBLIC LIMITED COMPANY

1. This opinion contains indications relating to the following items:

- ☒ Box No. I Basis of the opinion
- ☒ Box No. II Priority
- ☒ Box No. III Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
- ☐ Box No. IV Lack of unity of invention
- ☒ Box No. V Reasoned statement under Rule 43bis.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- ☐ Box No. VI Certain documents cited
- ☐ Box No. VII Certain defects in the international application
- ☐ Box No. VIII Certain observations on the international application

2. FURTHER ACTION

If a demand for international preliminary examination is made, this opinion will usually be considered to be a written opinion of the International Preliminary Examining Authority ("IPEA"). However, this does not apply where the applicant chooses an Authority other than this one to be the IPEA and the chosen IPEA has notified the International Bureau under Rule 66.1bis(b) that written opinions of this International Searching Authority will not be so considered.

If this opinion is, as provided above, considered to be a written opinion of the IPEA, the applicant is invited to submit to the IPEA a written reply together, where appropriate, with amendments, before the expiration of three months from the date of mailing of Form PCT/ISA/220 or before the expiration of 22 months from the priority date, whichever expires later.

For further options, see Form PCT/ISA/220.

3. For further details, see notes to Form PCT/ISA/220.

Name and mailing address of the ISA:



European Patent Office - Gitschiner Str. 103
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**WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY**

International application No.
PCT/GB2005/000937

Box No. I Basis of the opinion

1. With regard to the **language**, this opinion has been established on the basis of the international application in the language in which it was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.
 - ☐ This opinion has been established on the basis of a translation from the original language into the following language , which is the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (under Rules 12.3 and 23.1(b)).
2. With regard to any **nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence** disclosed in the international application and necessary to the claimed invention, this opinion has been established on the basis of:
 - a. type of material:
 - ☐ a sequence listing.
 - ☐ table(s) related to the sequence listing
 - b. format of material:
 - ☐ in written format
 - ☐ in computer readable form
 - c. time of filing/furnishing:
 - ☐ contained in the international application as filed.
 - ☐ filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
 - ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority for the purposes of search.
3. ☐ In addition, in the case that more than one version or copy of a sequence listing and/or table relating thereto has been filed or furnished, the required statements that the information in the subsequent or additional copies is identical to that in the application as filed or does not go beyond the application as filed, as appropriate, were furnished.
4. Additional comments:

Box No. II Priority

1. ☒ The validity of the priority claim has not been considered because the International Searching Authority does not have in its possession a copy of the earlier application whose priority has been claimed or, where required, a translation of that earlier application. This opinion has nevertheless been established on the assumption that the relevant date (Rules 43*bis*.1 and 64.1) is the claimed priority date.
2. ☐ This opinion has been established as if no priority had been claimed due to the fact that the priority claim has been found invalid (Rules 43*bis*.1 and 64.1). Thus for the purposes of this opinion, the international filing date indicated above is considered to be the relevant date.
3. Additional observations, if necessary:

**WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY**

International application No.
PCT/GB2005/000937

Box No. III Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability

The questions whether the claimed invention appears to be novel, to involve an inventive step (to be non obvious), or to be industrially applicable have not been examined in respect of:

- ☐ the entire international application,
- ☒ claims Nos. 7

because:

- ☐ the said international application, or the said claims Nos. relate to the following subject matter which does not require an international preliminary examination (*specify*):
- ☐ the description, claims or drawings (*indicate particular elements below*) or said claims Nos. are so unclear that no meaningful opinion could be formed (*specify*):
- ☐ the claims, or said claims Nos. are so inadequately supported by the description that no meaningful opinion could be formed.
- ☒ no international search report has been established for the whole application or for said claims Nos. 7
- ☐ the nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence listing does not comply with the standard provided for in Annex C of the Administrative Instructions in that:
 - the written form ☐ has not been furnished
 - ☐ does not comply with the standard
 - the computer readable form ☐ has not been furnished
 - ☐ does not comply with the standard
- ☐ the tables related to the nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence listing, if in computer readable form only, do not comply with the technical requirements provided for in Annex C-*bis* of the Administrative Instructions.
- ☒ See separate sheet for further details

**WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY**

International application No.
PCT/GB2005/000937

Box No. V Reasoned statement under Rule 43bis.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Yes: Claims	2-5
	No: Claims	1, 6
Inventive step (IS)	Yes: Claims	
	No: Claims	1-6
Industrial applicability (IA)	Yes: Claims	1-6
	No: Claims	

2. Citations and explanations

see separate sheet

Re Item I

Basis of the opinion

1. This opinion has been based on the following application documents:

Description pages 1-13 as filed

Claims 1-6 as filed

Drawings 1/2-2/2

2. Reference is made to the following documents:

- D1: WO 00/05664 A (JARG CORPORATION; BACLAWSKI, KENNETH, P) 3 February 2000 (2000-02-03)
- D2: MENA E ET AL: "Observer: an approach for query processing in global information systems based on interoperation across pre-existing ontologies" COOPERATIVE INFORMATION SYSTEMS, 1996. PROCEEDINGS., FIRST IFCIS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON BRUSSELS, BELGIUM 19-21 JUNE 1996, LOS ALAMITOS, CA, USA, IEEE COMPUT. SOC P, US, 19 June 1996 (1996-06-19), pages 14-25, XP010200745 ISBN: 0-8186-7505-5
- D3: LAKSHMANAN ET AL: "Interoperability on XML Data" CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS THE SEMANTIC WEB - ISWC 2003, October 2003 (2003-10), pages 146-163, XP002339274 Berlin, DE
- D4: CROSS V V ET AL: "Fuzzy ontologies for multilingual document exploitation" NORTH AMERICAN FUZZY INFORMATION, 1999. 18TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE, NAFIPS NEW YORK, NY, USA 10-12 JUNE 1999, PISCATAWAY, NJ, USA, IEEE, US, 10 June 1999 (1999-06-10), pages 392-397, XP010343038 ISBN: 0-7803-5211-4

Re Item III

Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability

Claim 7 has not been searched as it relies on the drawings in respect of the technical features of the invention and as such is directly contrary to the PCT (Rule 6.2(a) PCT). Consequently, a meaningful search was not possible (Article 17.2(a)(ii) PCT).

Claim 7 was not examined as it was not searched (Rule 43bis.1(b) & Rule 66.1(e))

PCT).

Re Item V

Reasoned statement with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

Document D1 discloses the following features of claim 1 (the references in parentheses applying to this document):

A method for accessing an information resource (abstract), comprising the steps of:

- (i) receiving a user query (page 10, lines 12-14);
- (ii) comparing portions of the user query with phrases in a set of predefined phrases to find one or more matching phrases (page 10, line 25);
- (iii) identifying, using predefined relationships between said predefined phrases and predefined concepts in an ontology, one or more concepts relevant to said portions of the received user query (page 11, lines 20-31); and
- (iv) identifying, using predefined relationships between predefined actions and said predefined concepts, one or more actions relevant to the received user query, wherein an action comprises providing access to an information source (page 12, lines 1-15)

These are all the features of claim 1. Consequently, the subject-matter of claim 1 is not novel (Article 33(2) PCT). The same applies mutatis mutandis to claim 6 as claim 6 is the corresponding apparatus claim.

A similar reasoning regarding novelty of claims 1 and 6 could be made with documents D2 or D3 with the passages cited in the international search report. Consequently, the subject-matter of claims 1 and 6 is not novel (Article 33(2) PCT) based on any of the documents D1 - D3 separately.

Dependent claims 2-5 do not contain any features which, in combination with the features of any claim to which they refer, meet the requirements of the PCT in respect of inventive step (Article 33(3) PCT), the reasons being as follows:

**WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING
AUTHORITY (SEPARATE SHEET)**

International application No.

PCT/GB2005/000937

- Claim 2 - the data content of the concepts is considered non-technical and as such does not contribute to inventive step.
- Claim 3 - Fuzzy relationships between the concepts of the ontology are known by D4 (section 4.1).
- Claim 4 - Deciding what should be done if no relevant task content is defined at step (iii) is a mere user requirement and as such cannot contribute to inventive step. It's implementation would then be trivial to the skilled person.
- Claim 5 - Deciding what should be done if one or more concepts identified at step (iii) are insufficiently specific to enable a relevant action to be identified at step (iv) is also a user requirement and as such cannot contribute to inventive step. It's implementation would then be trivial to the skilled person.

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☐ the entire international application,

☒ claims Nos. 7

because:

☐ the said international application, or the said claims Nos. relate to the following subject matter which does not require an international preliminary examination (*specify*):

☐ the description, claims or drawings (*indicate particular elements below*) or said claims Nos. are so unclear that no meaningful opinion could be formed (*specify*):

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	No: Claims	1, 6
Inventive step (IS)	Yes: Claims	
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Industrial applicability (IA)	Yes: Claims	1-6
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2. Citations and explanations

see separate sheet

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PCT).

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AUTHORITY (SEPARATE SHEET)**

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